

REMARKS

Claim 1 was previously amended to correct a typographical error.

Claims 43-44 were previously withdrawn in response to an earlier restriction requirement.

Claims 1-42 remain in this application.

35 U.S.C. §103**Claims 1, 6-11, 13-17, and 32-42**

Claims 1, 6-11, 13-17, and 32-42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,324,545 to Morag (Morag) in view of U.S. Patent 5,572,728 to Tada et al (Tada). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Amended independent claim 1 recites**A method comprising:**

identifying, in response to a search query, first multimedia objects having an associated keyword that matches a keyword in the search query and second multimedia objects that have content features similar to those of the first multimedia objects;

presenting the first and second multimedia objects to a user;

monitoring feedback from the user as to which of the first and second multimedia objects are relevant to the search query; and

annotating one or more of the multimedia objects, which are deemed relevant by the user, with the keyword.

Morag describes creation of personalized picture albums. A customer acquires images such as taking pictures with a digital camera. The customer may provide a text or voice annotation to the images as they are acquired. The

1 customer provides the images, which may include annotation, to a service
2 provider. The service provider allows the customer to provide input (feedback) as
3 to how an album of the images arrange prior to a final album being printed and
4 sent to the customer. The service provider prints out the final album with the
5 pictures (images) and the album is then mailed to the customer.

6 Tada describes a system to allow a user to edit important items (multimedia
7 objects such as parts of a speech, visual presentation, etc.) of an event such as a
8 conference, by use of a keyword. The keyword is used to retrieve items of the
9 event and create an event summary. In particular, a retrieving file is created based
10 on the keyword. A marker such as the word "determined" is attached to and
11 identifies images or matters, allowing review of "determined matters" without
12 having to scan through other (i.e., non-marked) matters or images.

13 The combination of Morag and Tada fails to teach the first element recited
14 by claim 1 of "identifying, in response to a search query, first multimedia objects
15 having an associated keyword that matches a keyword in the search query and
16 second multimedia objects that have content features similar to those of the first
17 multimedia objects."

18 The Examiner admits that Morag does not teach this recited element, and
19 relies on the secondary reference Tada as teaching "images retrieved by a retrieval
20 keyword are displayed in the form of a rectangular parallelepiped for each relevant
21 item" citing Tada at col. 10, lines 9-11 and "second set of images collected" citing
22 Tada at col. 11, lines 21-23. The Examiner specifically states that "[t]his teaches
23 the second set of images collected".

24 Although Tada performs an initial keyword search which retrieves images,
25 Tada does not describe "identifying, in response to a search query ... second

1 multimedia objects that have content features similar to those of the first
2 multimedia objects" as recited in claim 1. The "second set of images collected" in
3 Tada does not have content features similar to those of the first images (objects).

4 The image volume 22 described in Tada is filled by images retrieved by a
5 keyword and is generated by collecting related images. Such "related images" are
6 actually what Tada refers to as "determined matters". Tada col. 11, lines 21-25.
7 The determined matters described in Tada are searched by keyword. The
8 determined matters (images) are marked with a word such as "determined" and
9 allow the possibility "to review the determined matters in a short time". Tada at
10 col. 11, lines 11-20. Therefore the second set of images, the "related images" that
11 the Examiner refers, are determined matters which are also retrieved through a
12 keyword search, not through content features similar to the first images
13 (multimedia objects).

14 The combination of Morag and Tada fails to teach "monitoring feedback
15 from the user as to which of the first and second multimedia objects are relevant to
16 the search query; and annotating one or more of the multimedia objects, which are
17 deemed relevant by the user, with the keyword."

18 The Examiner specifically states that "Morag teaches a method comprising
19 monitoring feedback from a user as to which of the first and second multimedia
20 objects are relevant to the search query (col. 6, lines 53-55); and annotating one or
21 more of the multimedia objects, which are deemed relevant by the user, with
22 keyword (col. 9, lines 35-40).

23 The "monitoring feedback from a user" that is described in Morag actually
24 occurs when an album is generated by a service provider for the user, not in
25 response to a search query. "The album may be generated based on the thumbnail

1 images, and the customer may comment on these images, during the upload of the
2 complete image set". Morag col. 6, lines 53-55. Therefore Morag fails to teach or
3 suggest the recited element of "monitoring feedback from the user as to which of
4 the first and second multimedia objects are relevant to the search query".

5 The annotation described in Morag is when a user acquires an image such
6 as when a user takes a picture with a digital camera. Morag, col. 9, lines 36-37.
7 The annotation becomes part of the image and may be used to group the image
8 with other images. Morag does not disclose that annotation can take place after
9 the images are presented in the album. The annotation described in Morag is not
10 performed on objects that are retrieved based on a search query. Therefore Morag
11 fails to teach or suggest the recited element of "annotating one or more of the
12 multimedia objects, which are deemed relevant by the user, with the keyword".

13 Accordingly, a combination of Morag and Tada fails to teach or suggest the
14 claimed methods. Applicants respectfully request that the §103 rejection of claim
15 1 be withdrawn.

16 **Dependent claims 6-9** are allowable by virtue of their dependency on base
17 claim 1. Applicants respectfully request that the §103 rejection of claims 2-9 be
18 withdrawn.

19 **Independent claim 10 recites**

20 **A method comprising:**

21 iteratively retrieving multimedia objects from a database and
22 monitoring feedback from a user as to whether the multimedia objects are
23 relevant to a keyword in a search query; and

24 annotating the multimedia objects based on the user's feedback, with
25 the keyword.

1 The combination of Morag and Tada fails to teach or suggest the method of
2 claim 10. The Examiner specifically states that "Morag teaches a method
3 comprising: monitoring feedback from a user [as] to whether the multimedia
4 objects are relevant to a keyword in a search query (col. 6, lines 53-55); and
5 annotating the multimedia objects based on the user's feedback (col. 9, lines 35-
6 4[0])".

7 As discussed above in support of claim 1, the "monitoring feedback from a
8 user" described in Morag occurs when an album is generated by a service provider
9 for the user, not in response to a search query. In addition, also discussed above in
10 support of claim 1, the annotation described in Morag is when a user acquires an
11 image, and is not based on the "user's feedback" where the user feedback is in
12 response to a search query.

13 The Examiner admits that Morag does not explicitly teach "iteratively
14 retrieving multimedia objects from a database" and relies on Tada at col. 10, lines
15 21-23. The re-retrieval described by Tada; however, provides no assistance in
16 light of Morag as to the recited method of claim 10.

17 Accordingly, a combination of Morag and Tada fails to teach or suggest the
18 claimed methods. Applicants respectfully request that the §103 rejection of claim
19 10 be withdrawn.

20 Dependent claims 11, 13-17 are allowable by virtue of their dependency on
21 base claim 10. Applicants respectfully request that the §103 rejection of claims 11,
22 13-17 be withdrawn.

23 Independent claim 32 recites:

24 A system comprising:
25

1 an information retrieval unit to retrieve multimedia objects from a
2 database based on a search query;

3 a relevance feedback unit to capture a user's feedback as to whether
4 the multimedia objects are relevant to the search query; and

5 an annotation unit to annotate, with a keyword, the multimedia
6 objects based on the user's feedback.

7 The combination of Morag and Tada fails to teach or suggest the method of
8 claim 32. The Examiner presents the same arguments in rejecting claim 32, as
9 those presented in rejecting claims 1 and 10. Applicants assert the arguments in
10 support of claims 1 and 10. Applicants respectfully request that the §103 rejection
11 of claim 32 be withdrawn.

12 Dependent claims 33-42 are allowable by virtue of their dependency on
13 base claim 32. Applicants respectfully request that the §103 rejection of claims
14 33-42 be withdrawn.

15 **Claim 12**

16 Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over
17 Morag in view of Tada, and further in view of U.S. Patent 5,579,471 to Barber et
18 al (Barber). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

19 Claim 12 depends from claim 10 and hence incorporates the features of
20 claim 10. As such claim 12 requires "iteratively retrieving multimedia objects
21 from a database and monitoring feedback from a user as to whether the multimedia
22 objects are relevant to a keyword in a search query; and annotating the multimedia
23 objects based on the user's feedback, with the keyword".

24 Barber is cited for teaching "the searching method utilizing both keywords
25 and features". Barber, however, provides no assistance in light of Morag and Tada
as to the recited method of claim 10 from which claim 12 depends.

1 Applicants assert the arguments in support of claim 10. Applicants
2 respectfully request that the §103 rejection of claim 12 be withdrawn.

3 **Claims 2-5**

4 Claims 2-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over
5 Morag in view of Tada, and further in view of U.S. Patent 5,899,999 to De Bonet
6 (De Bonet). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

7 Claims 2-5 depend from claim 1 and hence incorporates the features of
8 claim 1. As such claim 12 requires "identifying, in response to a search query, first
9 multimedia objects having an associated keyword that matches a keyword in the
10 search query and second multimedia objects that have content features similar to
11 those of the first multimedia objects; presenting the first and second multimedia
12 objects to a user; monitoring feedback from the user as to which of the first and
13 second multimedia objects are relevant to the search query; and annotating one or
14 more of the multimedia objects, which are deemed relevant by the user, with the
15 keyword."

16 De Bonet is cited for teaching "adjusting the weight". De Bonet; however,
17 provides no assistance in light of Morag and Tada as to the recited method of
18 claim 1, from which claims 2-5 depend.

19 Applicants assert the arguments in support of claim 1. Applicants
20 respectfully request that the §103 rejection of claims 2-5 be withdrawn.

21 **Claims 18-24**

22 Claim 18-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable
23 over U.S. Patent 6,314,420 to Lang et al. (Lang) in view of Morag. Applicants
24 respectfully traverse the rejection.
25

Independent claim 18 recites

A method comprising:

retrieving multimedia objects according to a content-based retrieval process;

presenting the multimedia objects to a user;

monitoring feedback from the user as to which of the multimedia objects are relevant; and

annotating one or more of the multimedia objects based on the user's feedback, with a keyword.

The combination of Lang and Morag fails to teach or suggest the method of claim 18. The Examiner relies on Lang as teaching "retrieving multimedia objects according to a content-based retrieval process; presenting the multimedia objects to a user; and monitoring feedback from the user as to which of the multimedia objects are relevant"; however, does not point where in Lang such methodology is taught or suggested. Nevertheless, the Examiner admits that Lang does not teach "annotating one or more of the multimedia objects based on the user's feedback, with a keyword" and relies on Morag. As discussed above in support of claims 1 and 10, the annotation disclosed in Morag is performed by the user prior to entry in a searchable database, and prior to performing a search query. Applicants respectfully request that the §103 rejection of claim 18 be withdrawn.

Dependent claims 19-24 are allowable by virtue of their dependency on base claim 18. Applicants respectfully request that the §103 rejection of claims 19-24 be withdrawn.

Claims 25-31

Claim 25-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over De Bonet in view of Morag.

Independent claim 25 recites

A method comprising:

maintaining associations between keywords and multimedia objects, the associations being weighted to indicate how relevant the keywords are to the multimedia objects;

retrieving a set of one or more multimedia objects for presentation to a user;

monitoring feedback from the user as to which of the multimedia objects are relevant; and

adjusting the weights of the associations based on the user's feedback.

The combination of De Bonet and Morag fails to teach or suggest the method of claim 25. The Examiner relies on De Bonet as teaching "maintaining associations between keywords and multimedia objects, the associations being weighted to indicate how relevant the keywords are to the multimedia objects; retrieving a set of one or more multimedia objects for presentation to a user; and adjusting the weights of the associations based on the user's feedback." Not only does De Bonet fail to teach or suggest "adjusting the weights of the associations based on the user's feedback" but teaches away from feedback from a user. "Advantageously, my invention renders the search and retrieval operations totally independent of the user, thus advantageously eliminating a need for the user to have any prior knowledge of any characteristic used to classify an image, let alone

1 weight that characteristic vis-à-vis other such characteristics". De Bonet at col. 8,
2 line 64 to col. 9, line 2.

3 Morag is cited for teaching "the feedbacks are given from the user".
4 Morag, however, provides no assistance in light of De Bonet as to the recited
5 method of claims 25. Applicants respectfully request that the §103 rejection of
6 claim 25 be withdrawn.

7 Dependent claims 26-31 are allowable by virtue of their dependency on
8 base claim 25. Applicants respectfully request that the §103 rejection of claims
9 26-31 be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

All pending claims 1-42 are in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and prompt issuance of the subject application. If any issues remain that prevent issuance of this application, the Examiner is urged to contact the undersigned attorney before issuing a subsequent Action.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dated: 10/2/03By: 

Emmanuel A. Rivera
Reg. No. 45,760
(509) 324-9256 ext. 245

RECEIVED
CENTRAL FAX CENTER

OCT 02 2003

OFFICIAL